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A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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AS CHILDREN GO BACK TO SCHOOL

In Washington

Washington (D. C.) opened its public schools to Negro and white children alike (Sept. 13) as a "model" for other cities where segregation is still being practiced. For the first time, 98,000 youngsters in the nation's capital found themselves accepted into the school system with no regard for their race. Negro and white teachers also were assigned to the same schools. In accordance with the Supreme Court ruling last May, the District of Columbia is integrating its white and Negro schools over a one-year period. President Eisenhower has said he hopes the District plan will be a model for other schools in the nation which face the unification problem. The first day of mixed classes passed without incident in the city, which takes many of its customs from the South. . . . The police department sent an officer to every school but all they had to do was direct traffic.

Children who were in school last year returned for the most part to the same schools, but about 9,500 first-graders and newcomers were registered without regard to race. In addition, about 3,000 Negro students were transferred out of over-crowded schools into white schools with a low enrollment. A few Negroes who had to travel unduly long distances were also reassigned. . . . (*New York Herald Tribune*, September 14).

In Hobbs, N.M.

White and Negro children went to school together in harmony . . . in one of the first communities in the nation where racial desegregation had aroused talk of possible violence.

The peaceful opening of the school year was a triumph of civic stability over the activities of a Baptist preacher who contended that desegregation ran counter to the Bible.

Hobbs is a sprawling, dusty frontier oil town in the southeast corner of New Mexico, only four miles from the Texas line. Its 15,000 inhabitants, about 1,500 of them Negroes, are mostly transplanted Texans and Oklahomans accustomed to segregation. Hobbs was one of half a dozen New Mexico towns that maintained school segregation under an optional state law. . . .

However, within a few days of the United States Supreme Court's desegregation decision last May, the five-member

Hobbs School Board voted to comply fully this fall. . . .

. . . the schools reopened for the fall term — desegregated. The Washington School in a Negro residential district, reopened as a grade school with an all-Negro student body. Three of its fourteen Negro teachers were installed in new mixed schools. About 160 Negro students were enrolled in two elementary schools, two junior high schools and a high school.

Police cars and motorcycles patrolled the vicinity of each school, but remained as inconspicuous as possible to avoid provocation. . . .

An hour after the opening bell School Superintendent Charles L. Mills reported that everything had gone smoothly. . . . (*New York Times*, August 31).

In Baltimore

In Baltimore, the historic change went into effect smoothly and amicably, with the pupils, especially the younger ones, apparently unaware of the importance of their role. White and Negro parents, escorting beginners to school, chatted of common problems here and there.

Negroes were enrolled in all of Baltimore's elementary and secondary schools, with the division of the races ranging up to about 50 per cent in one elementary school building. Of the many all-Negro schools that operated last year, not one remained.

White parents have refused to send their children to one former Negro school, but only on the ground that the temporary building was unsafe and unsanitary. They have invited Negro parents to join them in protest. . . . (*New York Times*, September 8).*

In Missouri

Smaller cities are leading the way as Missouri starts integrating more than 60,000 Negro students into its public schools.

*We take note of the subsequent protest at one of the high schools, which appears to have been caused by adults (Ed.)

The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. Unless so stated, it is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes or positions of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations or of The National Council of Churches.

Although integration is not mandatory, at least ten communities have acted to end segregation in all or some of their classrooms for the fall semester. . . .

St. Louis and Kansas City where about two-thirds of the Negro students are located—have established time-tables providing complete integration by next year. . . .

State officials have made it clear they will strictly enforce the Supreme Court segregation ruling which affects 267 schools in 69 of Missouri's 114 counties. . . .

A variety of integration plans will be in effect this fall. Some cities are ending segregation only in junior and senior high schools, others are giving students a choice of attending either integrated or separate schools. . . .

Segregation also has been abandoned completely at Missouri University, Joplin College, Southwest Missouri State College, Kansas City Junior College and Central Missouri State College.

The St. Louis timetable provides for integration of high schools at the start of the spring term early next year and for grade schools next September. The St. Louis area had 32,870 Negro students last year.

Kansas City will also effect complete integration next year following the junior college start this fall. There were 10,481 Negro students in the city and Jackson County in the last school year. (*Kansas City Call*, August 20).

Indians Integrated

Indians and white children sat side by side in school . . . as New York ended more than 100 years of segregation.

The state said 1,535 Indian school children had moved out of the small, ramshackle schools on the reservations, in use since 1846, and into the public schools. . . .

Before 1846 most Indian children had no public schools at all. A few had mission schools, and some others could go with white children to public schools nearby. . . .

"It is of great benefit to Indian pupils in learning the language and customs of the people with whom they will live and conduct their business," . . . (the Commissioner of Education said). "It will benefit the white children by enabling them to learn of Indian culture." . . . (*New York Times*, September 24).

In Montgomery, Ala.

A group of 23 Negro children sought unsuccessfully to enroll in an all-white elementary school in an action that may set the stage for a lawsuit.

Nesbitt Elmore, a white Montgomery attorney, representing the group, said, "We definitely plan to take the issue into court." He said no decision has been made on when such a suit would be filed. . . .

This was the first attempt by Negroes to seek admission into Alabama public schools since the U. S. Supreme Court ruled against segregation in public schools. . . .

In Montgomery, the Negro group showed up at the new William R. Harrison School which opened its doors to students for the first time (this fall). The school is located near the city limits.

The Abraham's Vineyard Negro School, which is much smaller than the new school, is little more than a block away. A number of Negro families live in that section.

Robert Anderson, principal of the new Harrison school, advised the Negroes that they were not eligible to enroll as students there because they lived in another district. (*Atlanta Constitution*, September 18).

In Milford, Del.

The public schools were reopened (on Sept. 27) on an integrated basis but less than 20 per cent of the 657 white high school students reported for classes with 10 Negro students at the Milford High School. . . .

The first eight of the 10 Negro students arrived in two cars guarded by state troopers. The other two arrived on one of the 12 buses which bring students in from the neighboring communities.

An 11th Negro pupil who was scheduled to attend the school remained at home because of illness.

The buses which usually carry about 35 to 40 students, were half empty, as embittered white parents kept their threats to keep their children at home if the Negro students were admitted. . . .

The Bannecker Elementary and Junior High School, which also had remained closed for a week in the integration dispute, reopened also without incident. No white children reported to the all-Negro institution. . . . (*New York Post*, September 27).*

In West Virginia

Negro students were banned from white schools by Greenbrier County school officials . . . after 700 white residents voted to remove bodily any Negroes who attended classes.

Negro parents then voted to keep their children home until "equal school facilities" were provided by the Board of Education. . . .

Twenty-five Negroes who enrolled at

White Sulphur Springs High School were ordered to re-enroll at Bolling Negro High School at Lewisburg, nine miles (away). Negro pupils of elementary school age were to report to the nearest Negro grade school.

Sheriff James J. Dean, two deputies, two state policemen and two local policemen waited at the school as a few Negro students entered to remove their books. . . .

The Board of Education, at an emergency meeting, rescinded earlier directives allowing Negroes to enroll at schools closest to their homes. The school board said its action was based on the fact that "crowded conditions" existed in white schools while the Negro schools were "adequately staffed and supplied to accommodate the needs of Negro students." (*New York Times*, September 15).

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Police were called to restore order (recently) when the Barbour County (W.Va.) School Board assigned a white teacher and a dozen white students to what has been an all-Negro school.

Chief of Police James Paugh estimated 200 angry white parents jammed the board's meeting room and the hallway of the building. Others stood outside on the street.

It was the first mass protest since West Virginia school boards set out to eliminate segregation this fall in line with the Supreme Court's decision May 17. Chief Paugh said no blows were struck. There was no violence. No attempt was made to molest the three school board members. There were shouted protests and threatening talk.

Members of nine families announced they would not send their children to Hanging Rock elementary school, which has been for Negroes only. (*New York Times*, August 19).

In Baton Rouge, La.

Baton Rouge, La. officials refused (recently) to admit 30 Negro children to an all-white school located a block from Negro homes as an apparent south-wide drive began to break down public school segregation. . . .

School authorities told the children at Baton Rouge that "the registration hours are over" as they sought to enroll in the Gilmer Wright School, located in a school district where both whites and Negroes live.

Atty. Alex Pitcher, who accompanied the group, said that in the past, "Negro children have had to by-pass the school to find equal facilities in other parts of the city." (*Atlanta Constitution*, September 4).

States Prepare Briefs

The first step toward resumption of Supreme Court arguments on school segregation was taken . . . when attorneys for three southern states filed notice they wanted to take part in the legal debate.

Attorneys General for Florida, North Carolina and Oklahoma informed Su-

preme Court Clerk Harold B. Willey they wished to present their states' views when new arguments were heard in the fall. . . .

Arkansas, Tennessee, Maryland and Texas also notified Mr. Willey they wished to file "friend of the court" briefs later. The Court clerk said it was not clear whether these four also wished to take part in the oral arguments and he planned to ask them to clarify the point. If they wish to take part they will be permitted to do so on the basis of the notices received.

A spokesman for the Tennessee state administration said at Nashville (that) Tennessee filed its notice merely to protect the state's right to intervene if it finally decided to do so.

Attorney General Eugene Cook of Georgia said in Atlanta that three other southern states were joining Georgia in boycotting the hearings. And Bernard Sykes, Alabama's Acting Attorney General, said that state would file no brief because it might "legally or morally" obligate Alabama to conform immediately with any order the Supreme Court might issue. . . .

Court observers were interested in the fact that apparently only three states not directly involved in the May decision had responded to Chief Justice Earl Warren's invitation to all states that require or permit segregation.

. . . Apparently fourteen states decided to ignore the invitation. This (Sept. 15) was the last day for acceptance. (*Atlanta Constitution*, September 16).

Mississippi Completes Action

The State Senate completed action (Sept. 16) on a proposal to let the Legislature abolish public schools, making Mississippi the fourth Southern state to take positive steps toward evasion of the ruling against segregated classrooms.

The measure, a resolution to amend the Constitution, is subject to ratification by popular vote in a special election Dec. 21. Its supporters called it a "last resort" measure to preserve segregated schools by turning them over to private operation with state funds if other methods, including economic pressure against Negroes failed. . . .

The legislatures of Georgia, South Carolina and Louisiana also have enacted legislation designed to preserve the segregation tradition despite the Supreme Court. (*New York Times*, September 17).

AMONG CHURCH GROUPS

Virginia Presbyterians

Several state and regional church bodies in the South have taken a commendable, . . . stand on the desegregation of schools and on other related issues. Few, if any, have gone farther than did the Presbyterian Synod of Virginia at its recent Staunton (Va.) meeting.

Holding that "enforced segregation of the races is out of harmony with Christian theology and ethics," and that "the church in its relationship to cultural

*The Milford situation is still unsettled. The order to desegregate remains rescinded as of Oct. 4. (Ed.)

patterns should lead rather than follow," the Virginia synod adopted these historic recommendations of a special committee:

(A) That the sessions of local churches admit persons to membership "without reference to race."

(B) That all members cultivate "forbearance, patience, humility, and persistent goodwill."

(C) That institutions of higher education "related to the synod" adopt a policy of "opening the doors of these schools to all races," and

(D) That the same policy be considered for conferences throughout the synod.

Proving that its resolutions were more than pious voicing of inescapably logical doctrine, the Presbyterian synod directed a committee to appear before Governor Stanley's legislative commission on school segregation to urge that the state "avoid all action that . . . would seek to controvert the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States affecting segregation in public schools of Virginia." . . . (Norfolk Journal & Guide, September 11).

S. C. Presbyterians

The Presbyterian Synod of South Carolina (recently) voted to continue Jim Crow in its institutions when it adopted a motion sponsored by Dr. John McSween of Clinton which called for continuation of enrollment policies in institutions under the control and support of the synod. . . .

"It is the sense of the Synod of South Carolina that it is in the best interests of harmonious relations between the white and Negro races in this section at this time that the present enrollment policies in the institutions under the control and support of the synod be continued." . . . (Kansas City Call, September 17).

Diocese of Little Rock

Bishop Albert L. Fletcher, head of the Roman Catholic diocese of Little Rock, (recently) declared that Negro students will be admitted to white parochial schools in areas where the church has not provided separate schools for Negroes.

The new policy was revealed in a pastoral letter read in churches of the diocese, which covers all of Arkansas.

Calling on his parishioners to be calm in accepting the policy, the prelate's letter read in part:

"There is nothing to get excited about. I am merely outlining what has been the constant teaching of the church."

Bishop Fletcher pointed out in the letter that "it is especially urgent" that Catholic Negro children be admitted to "any Catholic school available" in places where there is no Catholic school especially for them. However, he explained that in areas where there are Catholic schools for Negroes, "the same spiritual urgency" does not exist. . . .

Touching on the recent Supreme Court's decision on segregation, Bishop Fletcher said:

"Catholic schools are classified as private schools and, as such, are not subject to the Supreme Court's decision. This being the case, some people have thought that Catholic schools will choose to continue the practice of racial segregation.

"This is a mistaken idea. It is contrary to the traditional practice of the church.

"Search the pages of history and you will find that where the civil law permits and where local custom and tradition does not forbid it, the church has never made any distinction of color or race. . . ." (St. Louis Argus, August 20).

Integrated Church in N. C.

While most of the churches in North Carolina cling to segregation and state officials predict dire things if schools are desegregated, at least one Tarheel Baptist church has been completely integrated for 16 years.

Although this textile town (Brookford) has no colored residents, Brookford Baptist Church, the Rev. W. C. Laney, white, pastor, has a colored choir leader, two colored singers and many lay members in its congregation.

The minister invited colored persons to join his church 16 years ago and has been backed up by his congregation ever since. Most criticism of the initial move has now disappeared. . . .

The Rev. Mr. Laney, who admits that "I was so prejudiced that I refused to shake a colored person's hand before I heard God speak to me about 16 years ago," now spends much time preaching his integration doctrine from other white church pulpits. (Afro-American, September 18).

A. M. E. Z.

Schools and colleges under the jurisdiction of the A. M. E. Zion Church have been ordered to amend their charters and rules to comply with the Supreme Court school decision.

The action was taken while 2,500 delegates attended the A. M. E. Zion Quadrennial General Christian Education Convention and Youth Assembly (in August). (Pittsburg Courier, August 21).

Evanston Resolution

The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches declares its conviction that any form of segregation based on race, color or ethnic origin is contrary to the Gospel, and is incompatible with the Christian doctrine of men and with the nature of the Church of Christ. The Assembly urges the churches within its membership to renounce all forms of segregation or discrimination and to work for their abolition within their own life and within society.

In doing so the Assembly is painfully aware that, in the realities of the contemporary world, many churches find themselves confronted by historical, political, social, and economic circumstances which may make the immediate achievement of this objective extremely difficult. But under God the fellowship of the

ecumenical movement is such as to offer to these churches the strength and encouragement to help them and individuals within them to overcome these difficulties with the courage given by faith, and with the desire to testify ever more faithfully to our Master.

From its very beginning the ecumenical movement by its very nature has been committed to a form of fellowship in which there is no segregation or discrimination. The Assembly of the World Council of Churches rejoices in this fact and confirms this practice as the established policy of the Council. (Adopted by Second Assembly, World Council of Churches).

EMPLOYMENT

The President (on Sept. 3) signed an Executive Order clarifying and strengthening the provisions of the standard non-discrimination clause which is included in all contracts executed by the United States Government. . . .

The text of the revised non-discrimination clause is as follows:

"In connection with the performance of work under this contract, the contractor agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, or national origin. The aforesaid provision shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay, or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. The contractor agrees to post hereafter in conspicuous places, available for employees or applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the contracting officer setting forth the provisions of the non-discrimination clause.

"The contractor further agrees to insert the foregoing provision in all subcontracts hereunder, except subcontracts for standard commercial supplies or raw materials." (Release from the White House Office, Denver, Colo., September 3).

HOUSING

Homes Bombed in Virginia

Just eight days after a Norfolk County Sheriff had advised Virginia's Governor Thomas B. Stanley that "all was quiet" in Coronado (Norfolk County, Va.), the third dynamite explosion in the area since August 24 ripped the side porch off a Negro-owned home, shattered windows throughout the house, and threw an engaged couple, who were unpacking dishes in a back room, against the wall. . . .

Conflict began in the Norfolk suburb early in August when residents of the former all-white neighborhood began to congregate in automobile "caravans" to discourage colored people from looking at or buying houses for sale in the area. . . .

Gatherings while Negroes attempted to occupy their property, name-calling, rock-throwing, and similar incidents have taken place during the past month while Negroes were appealing to the County law enforcement officials, city officials (who claim they have no jurisdiction), and to the Governor, to provide adequate police protection.

But even as the dust was settling from (the) bombing, the third in the Coronado area, Gov. Stanley was advising Norfolk county residents, through the press, that the state was assigning no more state police officers to the troubled area "at this time." . . .

A delegation of Negroes has twice visited County authorities to urge that a strict watch be kept on the section, and to ask that if insufficient police were available, County officials appeal to the Governor to send in the State Militia.

The latest delegation was told by Sheriff J. Arthur Hodges that they might as well "face the facts. When the Negroes moved into Coronado," the sheriff said, "they knew they were not wanted by the white residents of that section, and they knew they would have trouble trying to live there." . . .

. . . while Negroes were still waiting for police action, white youngsters were inside the unguarded house . . . breaking up china and glassware and a white bystander was casually remarking, "looks like they did a good job this time." (Norfolk Journal and Guide, September 18).

Mayor's Action Urged

Chicago's Mayor Martin Kennely was told (recently) by two prominent labor organizations to end the anti-Negro violence at the Chicago Housing Authority's Trumbull Park Homes at once or resign his office.

The blunt demand made by two one-time rival labor unions, the AFL-affiliated Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America and the CIO United Packinghouse Workers of America, came in an "open letter" to the Mayor appearing as a newspaper advertisement, . . .

With an estimated 40,000 members in Chicago packing plants and meat markets, the two unions have formed a joint committee under leadership of top officials

from both organizations to wage a continuing campaign against racial discrimination in housing. . . .

Damage to property has been estimated in excess of \$200,000 while police forces ranging from 200 to 1,200 men have still failed to quell the disorders.

The union statement declared: "We know full well the police can disperse illegal gatherings and protect property rights—when so directed. . . ."

The two unions said they "join the vast majority of law-abiding citizens in this city in demanding that you enforce the law at Trumbull Park Homes or admit your lack of courage to do so. In such event, then you should resign as Mayor of Chicago. . . ."

"The members of our unions, Negro and white, work side by side in Chicago's great meat industry," the open letter observed. "If Chicago citizens can work in harmony inside our industries—Chicago citizens can live in harmony inside our communities," it declared. (Chicago Defender, September 18).

RHODES SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

A Negro college has been invited to participate in the Rhodes Scholarship competition for the first time in the history of American education, Fisk University has announced. . . .

On July 29, Courtney Smith, American secretary of the Rhodes Trust, requested that Fisk University name an administrator who would begin representing the campus in the coming fall competition. . . .

Tenable at University of Oxford (Oxford, Eng.), the Rhodes Scholarships are awarded to exceptional young men and permits them to obtain a university degree in two years. Selection is made on the basis of literary and scholastic ability, outstanding qualities of manhood, physical vigor, and exhibition of leadership and cooperation.

Rhodes Scholarships are valued at \$1,680, a stipend sufficient for a scholar

to pay university expenses and vacation costs. Thirty-two are competed for in the United States each year by prospective scholars in every state. . . . (Christian Science Monitor, August 20).

ITEMS IN BRIEF

Segregation went into reverse (recently) when a dozen white persons who applied for admission to Virginia State College for Negroes were denied entrance.

Dr. Robert P. Daniel, president of the school, said the applicants were turned down because Virginia laws forbid the mixing of the races in education.

Most of the applications came from the towns of Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg. . . . (Chicago Defender, September 4).

William DeShue Ng has been appointed Stated Supply of the Grande Avenue Church (Cedar Rapids, Iowa), at the request of the congregation . . . Mr. Ng, a Chinese-American from Pittsburgh, is the fourth member of the 1954 class of Pittsburgh-Xenia Seminary to become identified with Cedar Rapids Presbytery. He will be the first pastor in the denomination with Chinese ancestry, it is believed. . . . (The United Presbyterian, August 16).

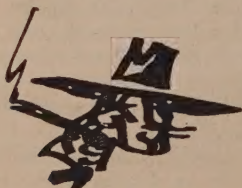
SUGGESTED READING

Journal of Negro Education, Vol. XXIII, No. 3, Howard University Press, Washington, D. C. (This Yearbook is divided into two parts—"An Appraisal of Recent Experience in Desegregation" and "Next Steps in Racial Desegregation in Education.") — \$2.50

Answers for Action — Schools in the South, Southern Regional Council, 63 Auburn Ave., N. E., Atlanta, Ga. — 15 cents.

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"I'VE SEEN SOME MIGHTY
IMPORTANT CHANGES IN MY
TIME...AND I BIN AQIN THEM ALL."

(Used by permission of the author
and illustrator, Frank Hanley.)

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